

CHRISTIANITY and CRISIS

A Christian Journal of Opinion

The Travail of Democracy in World Affairs

One of the most besetting sins of the popular American viewpoint of foreign policy, even in its more generous moments, is to look down on the problems of others. From the throne of the world we look to Europe and Asia, not as equals but as people to be understood, however compassionately, each in their own less fortunate terms.

We speak to Europeans in the condescending tone of greater political achievement and morality. We see Europe as a civilization whose past greatness is beclouded by imperialism, colonialism and power politics—sins from which we assume we are free. Europe is like the aging father who has had his chance. Curiously enough, we look at the newer, less privileged nations in much the same spirit. Their misery, poverty and unfulfilled aspirations are expected to yield to our goodwill and material resources. Their economic and political difficulties are seen too much as the products of our shortcomings than their own uncertainties and failings.

At no time since the end of World War II have the role and limits of this world outlook been more apparent. In a matter of weeks, American prestige and interests have been challenged virtually around the globe. Regimes that we assumed were friendly to the United States have either been upset or have reacted with peevishness or violence against America and its leaders. Lebanon, suffering from a profound internal crisis made no less acute by our device for public professions of loyalty and friendship to our cause (the Chamoun government's open commitment to the Eisenhower Doctrine), witnessed violence to American property because we were not pro-Arab enough. Algeria, by contrast, found French colons burning and de-

stroying American libraries because we were too pro-Arab. Latin Americans, long a citadel of Western security, stoned the Vice President because "we favored dictatorships and gave aid to Europe thirty-four times as great as Latin America." Burma writhed in political turmoil, and a democratic order in France was replaced by a regime variously described by Americans as benevolent autocracy, constitutional dictatorship and the road to fascism.

The French crisis is instructive in the light it throws on popular American thinking. France, to be sure, has suffered for decades from a paralysis of national will and the absence of responsible executive leadership. Its folly is demonstrated by the decline of its established political system which was not overthrown but which lost control, leaving a vacuum of effective public authority.

One of the illusions of absolute democratic dogma is its too simple view of leadership by the people. The people lead in choosing their public officials and the people give their mandate for the broad outlines of public policy. But as Jefferson, Lincoln and Wilson discovered, and now the French in their time, the people can't negotiate, command, decree or maintain public order. This authority by law and the constitution is vested in the executive. If he fails to assume such powers, others who frequently control the means of violence usurp the authority. The military acts when there is no executive energy; they move within restraints when proper civil authority is exercised. America has its examples of this—not all of them ancient.

France's travail should not be seen then as something unknown to the rest of the world. Frenchmen are Frenchmen, but their problems and their

greatness have roots in the common soil of peoples aspiring to freedom around the globe. Their greatness is a flowering of human initiative and respect for individual dignity, and it should not be forgotten that much of the inventiveness of the "European Movement" since the war was French.

Moreover, they have a tradition which is both as noble and as idealized as the "American Dream." President Roosevelt may, like many other Americans, have underestimated this tradition when, during World War II, he displayed amusement at General de Gaulle's sense of mission as a latter-day Joan of Arc. A people's historic mission and the symbols by which it lives are always incongruous to others. Yet in recent days when de Gaulle offered to save France from disaster, it was as the authentic bearer of this tradition.

Beyond this, however, the present French crisis illustrates well the narrow limits within which, at certain times, a democracy seeks to save itself and keep alive the central values of the Western tradition. Even if one puts the harshest construction on the temporary suspension of parliamentary government and the six months emergency powers, de Gaulle still emerges as the one alternative to tyranny of the Right or of the Left. Either he will master Soustelle and the army, or the army, its paratroopers and the heads of the Committee of Public Safety will master him. Those who see de Gaulle as the "Kerensky of French fascism" assume the latter development; those who predict his triumph trust him to beguile or coerce extremists into accepting an "Algerian solution."

Ironically, two of the bugbears of extreme democratic dogma are de Gaulle's principal allies. First, his very lack of policies and programs leaves his hands free to press any Algerian solution he finds practical and appropriate. Second, the chauvinism and the national tradition he symbolizes, and the chords of memory on which he plays even before the crowds of Algiers is the one counterforce to the momentum of the impassioned followers of Massu and Soustelle.

In this country there is need for a deeper awareness of the almost unending shifts and contingencies in foreign affairs. It will not do to say de Gaulle is austere, authoritarian and full of exaggerated visions of France. Nor will it help to choose sides with pure democracies and cast aside those who fail muster in one way or another.

France is essential to Europe's security as Lebanon is to stability in the Middle East. But neither France, Lebanon, Burma nor the struggling countries of Latin America are likely to pattern themselves in our image, even if some would try. Their choices are seldom between the model of American democracy proclaiming its dedication to freedom and the tyranny of our antagonist. They fall somewhere in between. Nor can we, from many thousands of miles, reshape their societies for them through economic or cultural largess. We can, however, by our restraint, dignity and prudence help them to avoid the irreversible choices from which there can be no return. We should ask of them in return only dedication to their own freedom, independence and self-respect, without which they and we shall falter and eventually fail.

K.W.T.

FRANCE AND DE GAULLE

WE HAVE WATCHED events in France with great concern but without making confident judgments. The tendency of many Americans to assimilate General de Gaulle to a familiar pattern of fascism or even of dictatorship is clearly wrong. De Gaulle is a great nationalist and he may do some stupid things in international policy because of his proud nationalism. He is an egotist who could easily be deceived by his faith in his own intuition. But he is no totalitarian or dictator, and the danger is much less that he may destroy the liberties of France than that he may fail in his policy and resign, leaving France in even greater chaos.

De Gaulle seems to have been proven right in thinking that the constitution of the Fourth Republic was a design for stalemate and confusion. It is to be hoped that he succeeds in showing the way to a new constitution that will reduce the number of parties in the National Assembly and enable the government to exercise strong and responsible leadership. It should be clear that weak government is a threat to the freedom that it is intended to conserve.

Perhaps the chief fear with de Gaulle has been that he represented the extreme Right on the Algerian question, but those who know his record best have testified to the contrary. His apparent connection with the revolt of the army in Algeria was,

as M. Auriol suggested in his letter to de Gaulle, the chief indication of danger. But de Gaulle's choice of a cabinet and other actions since he assumed power have confirmed the confidence of those who insisted that he was a moderate on the Algerian question and that he may be in the best position of any French leader to find a way to a tolerable solution. His promises to the people of Algeria prove that he is seeking a new and constructive approach, but it is difficult to see how even his prestige and temporary power over the state and the army can overcome the conflict between the two groups. We deeply hope that he may succeed.

J.C.B.

RACISM IN REVERSE

THIS NATION STANDS deeply in debt to the Negro community for its many and varied contributions from Booker T. Washington, scientist, in the last century to Ralph Bunche, statesman, in this one. None, however, has contributed more significantly than Dr. Martin Luther King, who became a legend overnight for his service to the nation as it has sought to resolve one of its most ticklish problems—the achievement of basic equal rights for all its citizens.

At a time when justice and equal rights for all are long overdue and when resulting dissatisfaction develops tensions, Martin Luther King has counseled his people to move forward with determination by non-violent methods. The nation is in his debt, for the prudence of the Negro race has given white Americans the opportunity to mature and to accept their responsibilities. Yet the white man must never take this patience for granted or see it as his right.

It was inevitable that not all of the race could stand the strain, that there would be some with prestige who, for one reason or another, would find it expedient to take a different tack. It is a wonder that there have not been many rebellious incidents. In recent days, however, the nation witnessed one such sad incident.

Rep. Adam Clayton Powell, long a leader in civil rights legislation in the Congress, disenchanted many recently when he turned a celebration of the fourth anniversary of the Supreme Court decision on integrated education into a platform for racist demagoguery. Under indictment by a Federal grand jury on charges of income tax evasion and spurned by Tammany Hall in his bid for reelection, Powell used the NAACP sponsored “non-partisan” rally to charge that “This is a white man’s country of dedi-

cated hypocrisy and of organized and frequently legalized contempt of the law.”

Anyone witnessing the occasion could not but have been moved by the inflammatory nature of Powell’s remarks. There was virtual incitement to violence and a form of racism in reverse appeared. His political opponents became “Uncle Toms” and Tammany chief Carmine De Sapio was cast in the role of a “Mississippi boss.” He warned De Sapio and Hulan E. Jack, a Negro and President of the Borough of Manhattan, against coming into Harlem where, he said, “we will make it mighty uncomfortable.”

As *The New York Post* editorialized, it is hard to find any heroes in the storm surrounding Rep. Powell. Certainly neither of the political parties comes off very well when one examines the record. It is particularly disappointing to see the Baptist Ministers’ Conference of Greater New York and Vicinity falling for the bait and pledging its full support to Powell, charging “a concerted smear campaign” and “a conspiracy between the reactionary Dixiecrats of the South and those equally reactionary political dictators of the North.”

Nevertheless, we feel that one organization has managed to keep its head through the melee and to inject sanity into the discussion—the NAACP. Earlier, at the time of Powell’s indictment, its executive secretary, Roy Wilkins, suggested that Powell had been “singled out because he does not bite his tongue on civil rights.” After the rally, the NAACP was quick to dissociate itself from Powell’s tactics and threats in a statement which said, in part: “We deplore and dissociate ourselves from the banner of extreme racialism raised by Mr. Powell . . . We cannot condemn racism in others while using it ourselves.”

We hope that the Negro community in Harlem will prove its mettle and take these words to heart, not being misled by one whose interests are almost totally confused.

W.H.C.

In Our Next Issue

A. WHITNEY GRISWOLD writes of the present state of the nation.

“We have had enough of the pious cant that says the sputniks were a good thing because they will wake us up, or that the reception of the Vice President in South America was a good thing because it showed up the weakness in the Good Neighbor Policy. This is worse than making a virtue of necessity. It is making disaster a virtue.”

The Impending Public School Crisis in Virginia

C. LAWSON CROWE

PUBLIC SCHOOLS in Charlottesville, Newport News and Norfolk have been ordered to proceed with the integration of white and Negro pupils beginning in September. Similar orders are expected to take effect at the same time in Arlington. Unless unforeseen events intervene, it seems likely that public schools in the cities that comply with these orders will remain open for a short time only.

Virginia's laws empower the governor to close any integrated school and thereby to divest the local authorities of all control over that school. The governor is then authorized to attempt reorganization of the school on a segregated basis. How this reorganization will be achieved has not been spelled out in detail. Possibly the governor will turn the schools over to local groups of citizens organized to operate the facilities as private schools. The governor will also provide state funds in one form or another for the support of such schools.

Virginia's attempt to circumvent the Supreme Court decision of 1954 seems unlikely to stand the test of a court appeal. This fact does not disturb those who welcome any delay of integration caused by court action.

The massive resistance laws are so inflexible that they actually appear to provoke violent and desperate action on the part of extremist groups. While this may not have been the intention of the framers of the legislation, the fact remains that the laws leave no room for a creative solution to the most crucial social problem of our day. For this reason alone these laws are an expression of the irresponsibility of our segregationist politicians and press.

The inflexible posture of the state-supported segregationist forces aims at creating an intolerable situation in which acts of violence are almost inevitable. Then the segregationists can say, "We told you so," and the cause of justice for all citizens regardless of race, as in the case of Little Rock, will suffer another serious setback.

The immediately impending integration in the schools of four major cities throughout the state will most certainly unite that militant minority which has little or no respect for law and order. Even if no violence occurs, segregationist strategy envisions an atmosphere of intolerance, fear and social tension that will intimidate citizens of both races and vitiate the effectiveness of all public edu-

cation. The present laws and the result of their enforcement, even if they are overthrown in later court decisions, will create a climate in which the integration of public schools will be unworkable.

Honest examination of the social realities of our time will reveal that imponderable forces have uprooted Southern mores of decades past. One often suspects that the intransigence of Southern segregationists is symptomatic of an inner anxiety arising from the awareness that they are fighting a delaying action which cannot be ultimately effective.

Southerners often attack the Supreme Court for upsetting the course of race relations in the South. Such thinking ignores the fact that it was Negroes who brought the cases before the Court that prompted the new interpretation of the Constitution and that many southern Negroes have attained a level of economic and political power which has enabled them to make a positive effort to secure their constitutional rights.

"A Price Too Heavy to Pay"

Whether we oppose or favor the integration of white and Negro students, we must acknowledge that the closing of the public schools is a price too heavy to pay. It can even be argued that racial segregation is a luxury we can no longer afford. The excessive cost of maintaining separate and equal facilities in our day is too obvious to mention.

In Virginia we are faced with the disruption of our public education system by our own law-making. The possible suspension and reorganization of our public school system in a haphazard and piecemeal fashion will not only be expensive but will seriously impair the whole educational process with losses that cannot be calculated in dollars alone. Wherever a genuine crisis arises it is conceivable that both white and Negro students may be without schools for weeks or even months. It is difficult to believe that the parents of school age children will accept happily Virginia's legal remedies for the alleged evils of integration.

The present laws have set the stage for the interruption of a public educational system already beset by innumerable difficulties. The lack of funds, facilities and adequately trained teachers, the overcrowded classrooms and the other ills common to public schools all over America are now to be compounded with the uncertainties of political ex-

Mr. Crowe teaches at Sweet Briar College in Virginia.

pediency and the whims and impulses of militant segregationists. Although closing the schools may irreparably damage the education of thousands of students among both races, such action has been made legal in behalf of an indefensible and, by all accounts, morally reprehensible ideal. Here is a classic case of throwing out the baby with the bath water, and if the consequences of present segregationist strategy were not so serious, it would be amusing to contemplate the antics of the grown men who framed the legislation in question.

In addition to the deleterious effects on our schools, the strained relations that are bound to arise within any community where such preposterous measures are enforced will undoubtedly create fear and suspicion out of proportion to the actual problems which different groups always face in their adjustments to each other. We may expect business relations between the races to be impaired as was the case in Little Rock. In a time of economic uncertainty surely both our state and Federal governments should avoid creating an atmosphere conducive to the deterioration of our economic life.

Furthermore, responsible citizens realize that our actions towards minority groups within our society are carefully observed throughout the world. The spectacle of venerable Virginia's dominant white population behaving petulantly and uncharitably towards fellow citizens who wish to better themselves in the best American tradition is hardly one that will aid the cause of democracy in its struggle with the Communist nations.

One feature of the recent session of the Virginia legislature at Richmond was the effort by segregationists to intimidate members who did not share their views. That a handful of liberal Democrats and Republicans from scattered areas over the state opposed the anti-integration measures is a tribute to their courage. It indicates further that moderate citizens of the state can find leadership if they are willing to make common cause against extremists on both sides of the question. One member of the House of Delegates reported recently that hordes of segregationists descended on any liberal delegate foolish enough to suggest that Virginia's school problem might be met in a more flexible manner.

The rejection of any legislation other than the "massive resistance" program advocated by Senator Harry F. Byrd and his political following has made mediation and reconciliation of the problem on a local basis practically impossible. No aspect of the current laws acknowledges the educational needs of Negro students. No door has been left open for

a graceful compromise if all legal obstructions to integration fail. This attitude reflects a peculiar kind of human arrogance and pride that is singularly lacking in charitable feeling and is not moved by pleas to conscience or reasonable arguments. Nevertheless, there have always been alternative solutions to the problem which, though not without difficulties, would surely create more just relations between Negroes and whites in Virginia.

An Alternate Plan

Any alternative would involve the minimal consciousness that justice for all citizens in public education is a fundamental aim in a democracy and that no social change closely associated with deep and intimate feelings can be brought about by a blanket formula applying without exception in every specific situation. A constructive program would necessarily be predicated on an impartial study of the projected needs of the total school population for the next several decades. (In Virginia such a study could have been undertaken in 1954 or 1955 and would have required a year or more for completion.)

On the basis of the data collected, a plan for school integration could be undertaken in those areas, probably urban, where racially different populations live in proximity and in favorable proportions to one another. An example of a possible program would be the integration of one grade at a time beginning with the first grade and continuing for a period of twelve years. Where such a pattern might be unworkable for geographical or other reasons, integration might be undertaken in the primary grades first and the length of the program reduced. It might be more reasonable to begin integration in one school at a time in order to meet specific problems of geographical location, population density and so on.

Situations vary from one school district to another and various expedients would be employed from place to place. In rural communities where there are large Negro populations, and where the opposition of whites is usually strongest, a frank arrangement to relieve tensions could be made by extending the integration program over a period of two or more school generations. At the same time, such a program would be accompanied by substantial improvements in the schools still used primarily by Negroes. Finally, the state should concentrate every effort to attract and support trained teachers of both races and should develop a long range building program based on projected school needs.

To the segregationist the outline suggested above will be the rankest heresy. To the Negro, eager not only to establish principles but also to improve his economic and social position, the proposals will seem to be a compromise in favor of white racial prejudices. Nevertheless, some such moderate program possesses a more realistic understanding of the forces at work in our society than either the attempt to enforce absolute segregation or introduce total and immediate integration. This outline has the virtue of flexibility and, in this respect, it is more politically realistic.

The Goal is Justice

The fundamental goal in the current struggle is justice for all citizens. All other issues so often invoked by segregationists are, therefore, irrelevant. Whether one believes that the NAACP is a subversive organization or the savior of mankind is irrelevant to the immediate problem of a just education for all who attend tax-supported institutions of learning. Whether the racists are right or not about the intellectual or moral superiority or inferiority of one race over another is irrelevant.

And it might be noted that racists tend to overlook the fact that their theories presuppose a uniformity among members of the same group which does not exist. We cannot consistently object to white and Negro pupils being together in school because of alleged differences in racial intelligence unless we also separate children within each group according to their respective levels of intelligence. This is a task which we have always been reluctant to undertake since, in the first place, it would be expensive. Secondly, it would be a practice susceptible to arbitrary and undemocratic abuse, and would probably have negative effects on the morale of those not selected for the higher ranks. Finally, it would be scientifically dubious since there is still no way to be absolutely certain that division by intelligence has been carried out accurately except in the most obvious instance of the genius and the feeble-minded.

Intermarriage between Negroes and whites cannot be introduced as an issue. In Virginia intermarriage is against the law. None of these objections should be allowed to obscure the basic issue of justice. Many whites criticize Negroes who have pressed for their rights through the courts. It is interesting to note that under the present "massive resistance" laws, it is the white segregationists who are the legalists. Faced with any sort of just alternative to continued discrimination, the Negro community would probably be at least as co-

operative as it wishes the white community to be.

Before the vociferous attitude of the segregationists, many moderate whites feel intimidated and impotent. The absence of any middle ground has made many Southern citizens feel that there is little or nothing they can do to alleviate the current crisis in human relations. This feeling is interesting, however, since it indicates that there is not the unanimity of segregationist sentiment which the present anti-integration laws presuppose. Some northern counties in Virginia are much better prepared to undertake integration than the majority of the largely rural southern counties. It is an unfortunate fact, however, that the state government has denied Arlington and Albemarle Counties the right to determine their own policies in keeping with previous court orders to integrate.

Although it seems paradoxical, the ultimate resolution of Virginia's educational problems probably rests on the charity, patience and grace of the Negro community. In large part, the success of the Negro struggle for an equitable share in Virginia's public education system will depend upon the ability of the Negro community to resist provocation to violence in any form. It is both ironic and perverse that the parents and school children who are discriminated against must assume the burden of arrogance and guilt of their discriminators and become, as it were, the redeemers of both.

And yet this analysis does seem to fit the facts of our situation. If the Negro community in Virginia can combine its growing political and economic strength with a measure of grace and forbearance, the immediate crisis in September may be partially alleviated, and moderate white citizens may find the courage to reject the legal galimatias of the militant segregationists. In this event the long range goal of justice in public education will be somewhat nearer realization.

Errata

In the editorial "Official Complacency and Nuclear Tests" in the June 9 issue, there were two errors. The last sentence of the second paragraph said: "On a similar issue, Prof. Pauling had the support of more than 900 scientists." It should have said "more than 9,000 scientists." A phrase was dropped from the first sentence of the fourth paragraph and is included here in *italics*. "The real issue may not have to do with the facts, that is, the facts about Carbon 14 which have been stated only a short time ago and the many other facts *about the effects of the fall-out on the health* of the living which have been cited often."

SPECIAL REPORT

RELIGION IN A FREE SOCIETY

When the hard-pressed Fund for the Republic, under fire from a number of quarters for its supposed "leftist" bias, announced that it was setting up a study program on "The Free Society," many of its friends cynically agreed that Dr. Hutchins and company had decided to get themselves a little respectability. This conviction was only strengthened when one of the major areas included in this study was the role of religion in this same free society. A far cry from the hurly-burly of black-listing!

If any of these skeptics were among the approximately one hundred participants in the first public fruit of this endeavor, the Fund-sponsored seminar on "Religion in a Free Society" held in New York City in May, the might have been forced to admit that discretion can be the better part of valor. While there are those who would question whether yet another seminar on any conceivable topic could be of value, still this subject would seem to be one that sorely needs examination. Relations between major religious groups in the United States have alternated between naked struggles of power over certain issues and vaguely patronizing "brotherhood" meetings that seemed bent on proving that Catholic, Protestant and Jew could be brought together with none of them saying anything worth listening to. Little wonder if the general public was roused from its general apathy only by such amusing and faintly disgusting sideshows as the *Baby Doll* controversy or such trivial crusades as bingo. Obviously, here was a place where a good, honest approach was needed.

And a good, honest approach was just what the Fund attempted. For speakers they lined up Reinhold Niebuhr, John Courtney Murray, Leo Pfeffer, Wilber G. Katz, Will Herberg, James Hastings Nichols, Walter J. Ong, Stringfellow Barr, Abraham Joshua Heschel, Gustave Weigel and Paul Tillich. To insure proper reaction and comment they brought together a group of participants ranging from Paul Blanshard to Patrick J. Sullivan of the Legion of Decency.

The seminar opened on a high level with a brilliant defense of the classical tradition by Father Murray. He defined the four major religious positions represented at the meeting as four "conspiracies" in the ancient and honorable sense of that term, groups with a common objective, and sought to outline the "consensus" that holds together members of these four groups and all members of society. (The four "conspiracies" are Catholicism, Protestantism, Judaism and secularism. No such grouping of religious tendencies is ever completely satisfactory, and this is no exception but it does as well as most.)

The unfortunate fact that illness prevented Dr. Niebuhr from giving a matching address on the same topic, "Religious Pluralism and Civic Unity," helped create a certain imbalance of approach.

(President Hutchins, called in as a pinch-hitter, gave one of his characteristic funeral orations for freedom. While stimulating, it had no connection with the main stream of thought of the seminar.) In the absence of an alternative to Father Murray's polished rationalism, the classical ideal remained the shining touchstone about which discussion revolved.

Several persons challenged Father Murray as to a certain vagueness in his "consensus" the first evening. Some may have even questioned the feasibility of such a concept during the following two days when discussion descended to the sweaty plain of the concrete. "The Meaning of the Separation of Church and State" was hopefully listed in the program for the second day, but it soon became clear that meanings would have proved more accurate a description. Disagreements abounded on recent Supreme Court interpretations of the First Amendment as well as on the Amendment itself. More and more, discussions gravitated to the major sore spot of aid to parochial schools.

On the third day, assigned to "Religion and Education," tempers began to fray. Participants who had worried about discussions being "too genteel" soon discovered that their fears were groundless. With Dr. Nichols' speech attacking Catholic education as "censored" education and with his assertion that American liberties traced back to English Puritanism and Cromwell, the fat was in the fire. Hidden resentments began to make themselves clear in the bursts of rhetoric claiming Magna Charta for various traditions and in bitter questions as to who burned what heretics. An extra, informal, "rump" session was arranged for the evening to allow further expression for all.

Informal is far too sedate a characterization for that evening session which had more the air of chaos. Hostility here was not concealed (one eminent monsignor kept proclaiming belligerently, "Let's take the gloves off."). Speakers interrupted each other in passionate midsentence. Jew quarreled with Jew, Catholic with Catholic, Protestant with Protestant. When the meeting broke up, there were those who left the hall in dismay, wondering if there remained any basis for civilized debate.

And yet, oddly enough, this meeting cleared the air. When the participants reassembled the next morning to hear Father Ong speak with lucidity and charity on "Religion, Free Society and Secular Culture," they were able to respond with lucidity and charity. Even a discussion on censorship by Stringfellow Barr elicited more understanding of positions than is usual in this field. (So much so that the wonderfully ludicrous possibility emerged of Dr. Hutchins sponsoring a seminar whose main practical effect might be to enable various censorship groups to work more closely together.)

With the final day, there emerged a demonstration of what kind of consensus might be possible among the various traditions. Three fine addresses by Rabbi Heschel, Father Weigel and Dr. Tillich were remarkable, not only for the quality of the individual speeches but for the way in which they

complemented each other. Each sounded the authentic note of his own tradition, but by implication pointed beyond in a way that made the phrase, "the Judaeo-Christian tradition" seem more than a Brotherhood Week abstraction.

This then was the Seminar. What conclusions, what possibilities emerged? Perhaps a better approach would be to ask what questions emerged and, more particularly, what questions emerged for each group to ask itself. For it seems to me that the lasting value of such encounters must come not from polemic or "better public relations" but from self-criticism. For Protestants there are several such questions.

Perhaps the basic question is whether we do not make the naïve assumption that the United States somehow or other belongs to us as Protestants. A case can perhaps be made that the First Amendment rests upon a "free church" spirit and cannot be sustained without such a spirit, but to accept this case seems to me to involve Protestants in many more difficulties than it solves. Even if this argument is historically true, we are now too far down the stream of a truly pluralistic society for this fact to have much more than nostalgic value.

In addition, to make this assumption, that American society rests on Protestantism (and one segment at that), raises serious questions about the role of the Protestant churches in society. The whole relation of church and society is one that American Protestantism has had great difficulty with and a strange love-hate pattern on the part of the churches has been much in evidence.

Related to this has been Protestant understanding of the Roman Catholic Church in America. What we really want, it often seems, is for the Roman Church to become a Protestant group and this it will not do. To accept this fact is not in any sense to "give in to Rome" but to be able to have an honest understanding of what our problems are.

Too much we Protestants are still captives of our stereotypes of the Roman Catholic Church. (Not that there aren't plenty of Catholics to confirm us in these stereotypes.) We see what we want to see and do not see what doesn't fit our prejudices. Frequently unobserved, the intellectual struggle going on within American Catholicism is one of the most important facts on the contemporary religious scene. We should be concerned with this as Protestants; we cannot help being concerned as Christians.

The obverse of this is our bland geniality to secularism. If any group was under-represented at the seminar, it was the secularists. This is hardly surprising since the true secularist does not compose polemics against religion; he is simply not interested. This indifference is much more of a threat than any overtly hostile belief and is one that Protestants have been strangely indifferent to, bemused as we have been by memories of historical conflicts.

None of these questions are in any sense new questions, but neither have they been answered as yet.

The Fund Seminar and similar meetings have led to talk of an "era of good feeling" between religious groups, particularly Catholic and Protestant. This phrase has unfortunate connotations, and it is to be hoped will not find too wide an acceptance. There are too many fears and tensions for an era of mere "good feeling" to have much value. Some of the necessary readjustments of attitude will be quite painful since we are dealing with matters of "ultimate concern" and not aiming at any Madison Ave. syncretistic slogan of "you go to your church and I'll go to mine and who gives a damn."

Perhaps a better phrase would be an era of "honest approach." For what is involved here is the matter of honest approach, and modern psychiatry has reminded us how difficult a job that is. If the Fund for the Republic has helped us one step on this road, we are all in its debt.

ARTHUR MOORE

Mr. Moore is an editor of *World Outlook* and contributes to various journals.

CHRISTIANITY and CRISIS

A Christian Journal of Opinion
537 WEST 121 ST. • NEW YORK • N. Y.

EDITORIAL BOARD

REINHOLD NIEBUHR and JOHN C. BENNETT, *Chairmen*
WAYNE H. COWAN, *Managing Editor*
ODESSA SOUTHERN ELLIOTT, *Assistant Editor*
M. SEARLE BATES WALDO BEACH AMOS WILDER
ROBERT MCAFEE BROWN F. ERNEST JOHNSON
JOSEPH SITTLER HENRY P. VAN DUSEN
RICHARD T. BAKER J. OSCAR LEE
KENNETH W. THOMPSON WILLIAM LEE MILLER

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

HENRY SMITH LEIPER JOHN A. MACKAY
FRANCIS P. MILLER M. M. THOMAS
JOHN BAILLIE WILLIAM F. MAY ROGER L. SHINN
HERBERT BUTTERFIELD

CONTENTS

THE IMPENDING PUBLIC SCHOOL CRISIS IN VIRGINIA
C. LAWSON CROWE
RELIGION IN A FREE SOCIETY ARTHUR MOORE

DETROIT PUBLIC LIBRARY
BOOK RECEIVING DEPT
5201 WOODWARD AVE
DETROIT 2 MICH